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## Residents opposed, again, to marina expansion proposal

Monday, September 15, 2003

By Terry Judd

CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

A proposal by Keenan Marina to expand three main docks and add 27 new boat slips is being contested by residents of the adjacent Veit's Landing condominiums because it would restrict their access to Spring Lake.

□

Officials with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality are expected to make a decision within the next two months whether to approve Keenan Marina's expansion plans after they held an hourlong public hearing Wednesday in Ferrysburg.

About 25 city residents attended the hearing to express concerns with the project that would expand the total number of boat slips at the marina from 205 to 232.

James Fortney, with the DEQ's geography and land management division, told the audience that a decision on the marina could come as early as 30 days. The marina is seeking a permit under the Inland Lakes and Streams section of the federal Environmental Protection Act.

Even if it receives DEQ approval, the project still must be reviewed and approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, officials said.

Keenan Marina, 526 Pine, is located on Spring Lake between the Veit's Landing and the North Cove Dockominiums, 400 Pine. The marina expansion involves three main docks on Spring Lake located on the northern half of the facility.

Coupled with the project would be the installation of 102 mooring piles

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Residents opposed, again, to marina expansion proposal

around the three docks. Parking would remain at 358 spaces.

Wednesday's hearing was called after the DEQ received a number of letters questioning the expansion project and its effect on adjacent property owners, many who live in Veit's Landing.

Veit's Landing Attorney Keith P. Walker said the latest expansion plan represents the third time Keenan Marina representatives have sought state approval for the expansion of its three docks.

Besides legal objections, Walker said area residents are fighting the expansion project because of environmental quality concerns.

Walker said the condominium association is prepared to take its objection to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and even to Ottawa County's 20th Circuit Court if necessary.

Craig Bessinger, Ferrysburg interim city manager, said the city has not taken a position on the expansion plan at this juncture. Under Ferrysburg ordinance, the marina is supposed to provide 1.5 parking spaces for every slip. Bessinger said the city would examine the 358-space parking lot to see whether there are enough spaces to serve the marine, but a retail building owned by the marina that fronts Pine Street.

Keenan Marina Attorney Michael Hayes agrees the center of the DEQ review will be on riparian rights. He said marina owner Brian Keenan purchased a parcel from Veit's Landing developers in 1990 so that Pier A could be built.

"It was Brian Keenan's understanding that purchasing the property would allow him to keep Pier A and extend it in the future," Hayes said.

Hayes said the DEQ was been provided documentation backing the marina's position. He said the marina withdrew plans to expand Pier A in 1992 and 1993 in order to "expedite" further improvements to the marina at the time.

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